Economic cooperation between India And Pakistan

2748. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have decided to set up a Joint Parliamentary Group on Economic Cooperation between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) to what extent this group would help to improve Economic Cooperation between the two countries;

(d) whether Pakistan has also decided to open land route for trading selected commodities, including live animals; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, the items exported to Pakistan so far, and those likely to be exported?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise

(d) Till May, 2005, trade with Pakistan on surface route had been restricted to rail through the Attari/Wagah border. Land Customs Station (LCS) at Attari on Indian side has been a notified road route for import and export of goods from Pakistan since 21.11.1994 whereas Wagah road route on Pakistan side was not open for bilateral trade. In May, 2005, Government of Pakistan announced its decision to import certain essential commodities from India through land (road) route as well.

(e) The above essential commodities consist of certain agricultural items, halal meats and few categories of live animals. Since then items namely garlic, potato, ginger, tomato, onion, buffalo meat, sheep and goats have been exported from India to Pakistan through the Attari/Wagah road route and these exports are expected to continue through this route so long as the said decision of Pakistan would be in force.